

Jefferson County Schools
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Superintendent:
Bondy Shay Gibson, Ed.D.

Board Members:
Kathryn Skinner, President
Mark Osbourn, Vice-President
Gary Kable
Laurie Ogden
Arthena S. Roper

February 7, 2019

Dear Mr. Zarin,

I am responding to your announcement of Monday, January 28, 2019 in which you represented Rockwool's intent to unilaterally pursue an evaluator to complete the independent Human Health Risk Assessment (HHRA) requested by the Jefferson County Board of Education (JCBOE). In the statement Rockwool characterized the request as follows: "...the Jefferson County Board of Education asked ROCKWOOL to conduct a human health risk assessment (HHRA) with a specific focus on school-age kids, which we readily committed to doing." In the view of the Jefferson County Board of Education there is a significant omission to that statement. The HHRA process you announced is not independent. As Mrs. Skinner (JCBOE Board Chair) conveyed repeatedly and clearly in the August 27, 2018 JCBOE meeting, it was a non-negotiable requirement that the HHRA be conducted independently by an organization selected through a transparent community engagement process or the results would not be considered valid.

Your statement accurately characterized the significant investment of time and effort expended by all parties to ensure that specific cornerstones of a truly "independent" evaluation were included in the solicitation, selection and study design process. The JCBOE shares the disappointment and frustration of all parties that this lengthy process of due diligence and community involvement did not result in a viable candidate. However, the process itself was well-constructed, engaged the community and contained multiple safeguards to assure the JCBOE and the public that the results would be unbiased. Rockwool's proposed resolution conveyed in your statement consists of withdrawing from this collaborative and transparent process to unilaterally engage an entity to complete the HHRA. This proposal does not meet the JCBOE's standard for transparent, engaged and collaborative conduct in our community. Therefore, on behalf of the JCBOE I am writing to convey that the JCBOE formally rejects your proposed plan of action and does not consider it a fulfillment of your commitment.

The purpose of the independent HHRA was to provide an opportunity for the Board to make a determination of the risk to children unmitigated by pre-determined biases. As a body, JCBOE holds their duty to children's well-being as a sacred covenant with the



community they serve. The Jefferson County Board of Education's willingness to act with careful deliberation and sober assessment of facts during an emotionally charged and divisive debate is evidence of the seriousness with which they fulfill this commitment. As required by the West Virginia Code of Ethics for School Board members this Board has made every conceivable effort to... "Render all decisions based on available facts and independent judgement and refuse to surrender that judgement to individuals or special interest groups".

As a result of your decision, you are hereby advised that the final ethical requirement of every Board member is to "Remember that the first and greatest concern must be the educational welfare of the students attending the public schools." Given the failure to provide independent verification of the safety of Rockwool as it pertains to children's health and welfare, the JCBOE will therefore pursue, any and all legal, ethical courses of action to oppose the enactment of the Payment In Lieu of Taxes Agreement.

Respectfully,

Bondy Shay Gibson, Ed.D
Superintendent
Jefferson County Schools